

Hadjak
Gyulnazaryan

Little
Arthur's Sun

Two Armenian Stories

MAP OF THE SOVIET UNION

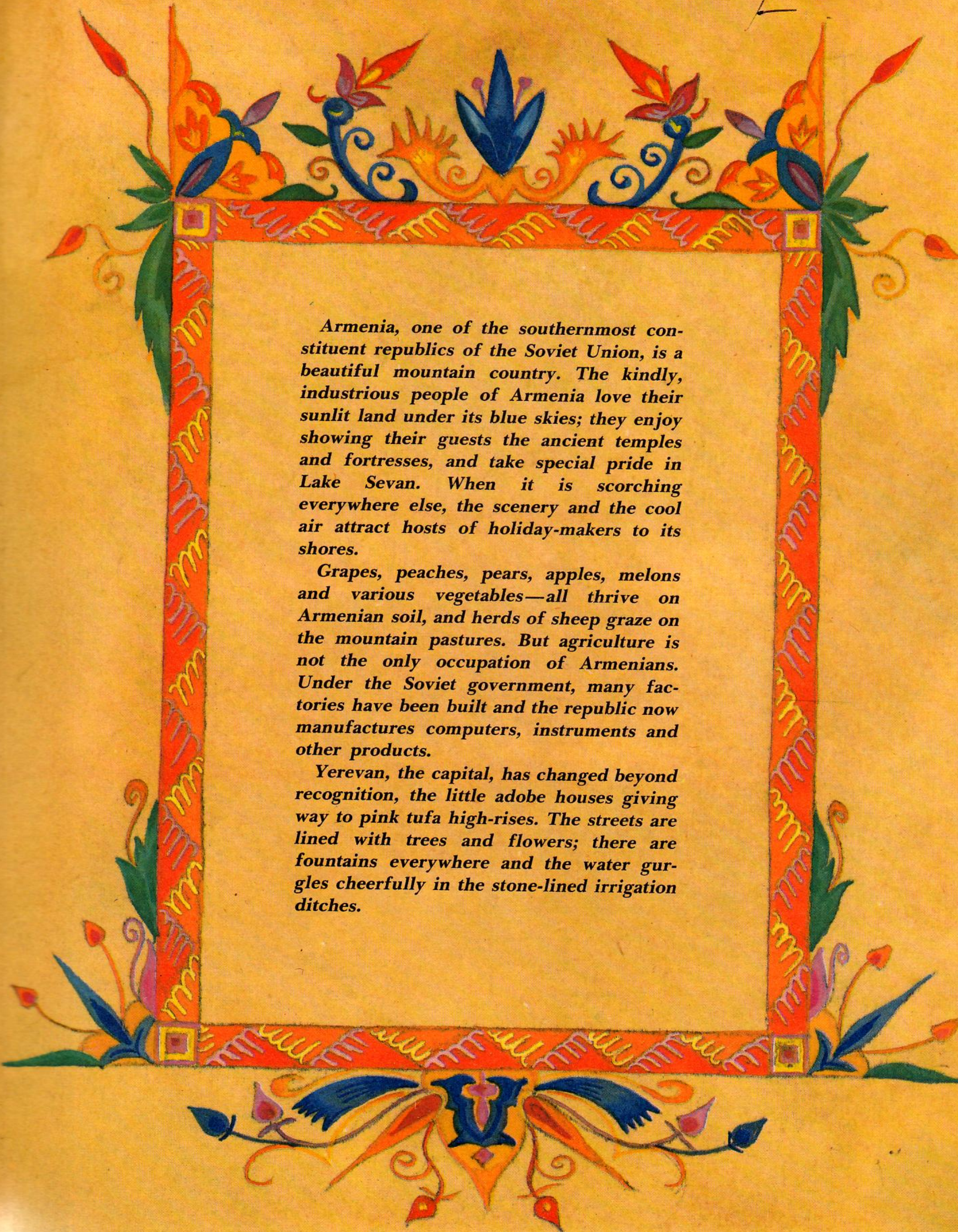


MOSCOW, THE CAPITAL OF THE SOVIET UNION

ARMENIA



Armenia Gupor



Armenia, one of the southernmost constituent republics of the Soviet Union, is a beautiful mountain country. The kindly, industrious people of Armenia love their sunlit land under its blue skies; they enjoy showing their guests the ancient temples and fortresses, and take special pride in Lake Sevan. When it is scorching everywhere else, the scenery and the cool air attract hosts of holiday-makers to its shores.

Grapes, peaches, pears, apples, melons and various vegetables—all thrive on Armenian soil, and herds of sheep graze on the mountain pastures. But agriculture is not the only occupation of Armenians. Under the Soviet government, many factories have been built and the republic now manufactures computers, instruments and other products.

Yerevan, the capital, has changed beyond recognition, the little adobe houses giving way to pink tufa high-rises. The streets are lined with trees and flowers; there are fountains everywhere and the water gurgles cheerfully in the stone-lined irrigation ditches.



Georgia

Kirovakan

Leninakan

Aragats Mt. Byurakan
Astrophysical Observatory

Dilizhan Preserve

Echmiadzin Cathedral and Monastery

Garni

Hosrov Preserve

Yerevan

Arpa-Sevan Tunnel

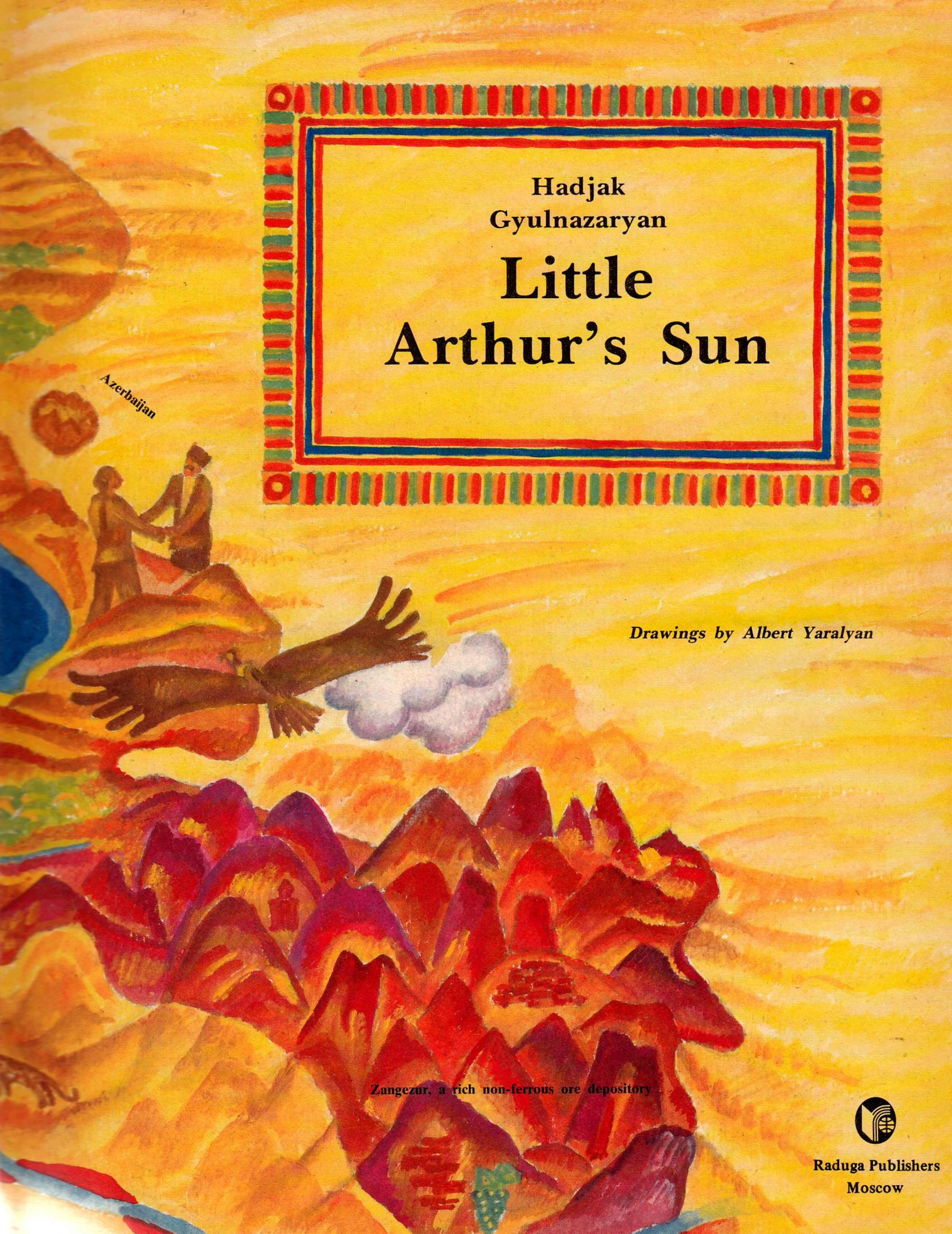
Ararat Valley

Arpa River

Araks River

Turkey

Iran



Hadjak
Gyulnazaryan

Little Arthur's Sun

Azerbaijan

Drawings by Albert Yaralyan

Zangezur, a rich non-ferrous ore depository



Raduga Publishers
Moscow



On the site of an ancient fortress in the Garni Gorge, ruins of formidable walls with quadrangle towers, of some edifices in the palatial ensemble, and several temples have remained. The pagan Sun Temple, built in the 1st cent. A.D. and destroyed by the earthquake of 1679, was the most beautiful. Several years ago, the Garni Temple was restored. Now the white edifice, with its graceful columns, adorns as before the high cliff under the generous Armenian sun.



LITTLE ARTHUR'S SUN

Grannie was not fond of autumn. Little Arthur, on the other hand, enjoyed it. Grannie was not fond of autumn because it brought rain, and that made her leg ache.

Arthur liked autumn very much. It brought so many good things. Peaches and grapes, pears and apples. And Mother would make all sorts of 'vitamins' from the fruits.



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Fruit harvest
in Armenia







A village market
in Armenia

3



Sudjukh are walnuts in paste made of flour with grape juice

Every autumn morning she would say to Father:

‘Mesrop, go and buy some apples and grapes: the child needs vitamins.’

And Father would go to market and buy some apples, pears, pomegranates and much besides.

Little Arthur was exceedingly fond of autumn.

Not Grannie. Grannie did not need vitamins. Grown-ups generally did not seem to need vitamins. Grown-ups seemed to eat peaches, grapes and pears just for the fun of it. As far as they were concerned, they were simply peaches, grapes and pears, and not vitamins at all.

Alani are dried peaches stuffed with sugared walnuts

An ancient saltcellar

The rain was drizzling outside, and Grannie was lying on the settee indoors, hunched up; she was lying there, softly moaning to herself, 'Ooff, ooff, ooff.'

Arthur went over to her.

'Gran, do you hear me, Gran?' he said.

'What is it, balik-djan?' she replied.

'It's your leg again, isn't it?' he asked.

'Yes, my dear,' was all she murmured.



Sudjukh nuts are boiled in special vessels



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He offered Grannie an orange.

'Go on, eat up the vitamins, they'll take the pain away,' he said.

Grannie smiled.

'You have it, balik-djan,' she replied. 'Oranges won't help me. I need sunshine, but the sun's gone behind the clouds to spite me.'

Little Arthur was very cross with the clouds. He summoned his little dog Kotot from under the bed, picked up his pop-gun and went onto the balcony.

'Bark at the clouds,' he told the pup, 'and I'll shoot them with my gun.'

Kotot gave a couple of barks, but not very fiercely. No doubt he did not understand and thought Arthur wanted to play with him; so he gave a happy bark. Such a bark would certainly not scare any cloud.

As a matter of fact, Arthur did not even notice Kotot barking. He was firing his gun with a ferocious look on his face, yelling:

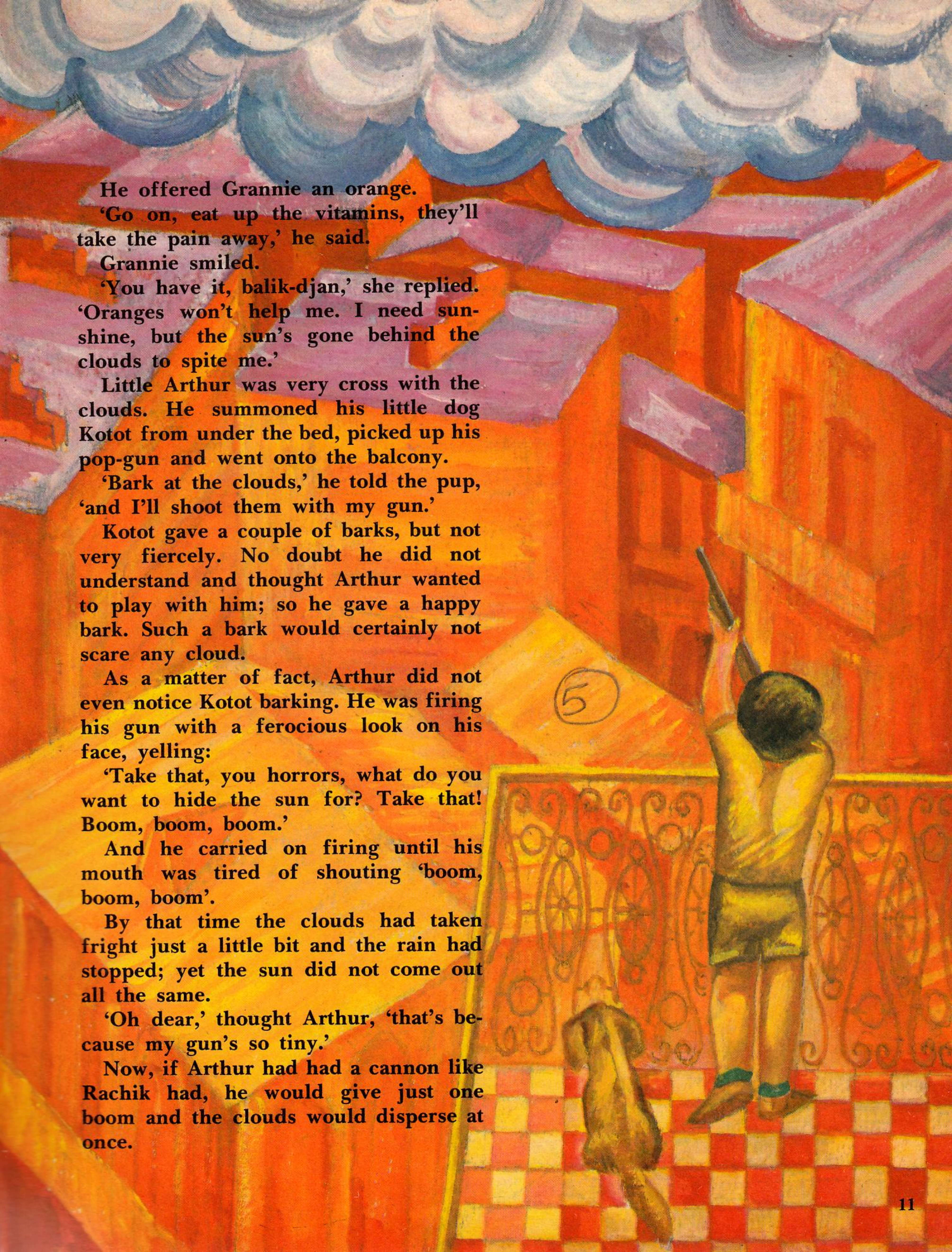
'Take that, you horrors, what do you want to hide the sun for? Take that! Boom, boom, boom.'

And he carried on firing until his mouth was tired of shouting 'boom, boom, boom'.

By that time the clouds had taken fright just a little bit and the rain had stopped; yet the sun did not come out all the same.

'Oh dear,' thought Arthur, 'that's because my gun's so tiny.'

Now, if Arthur had had a cannon like Rachik had, he would give just one boom and the clouds would disperse at once.



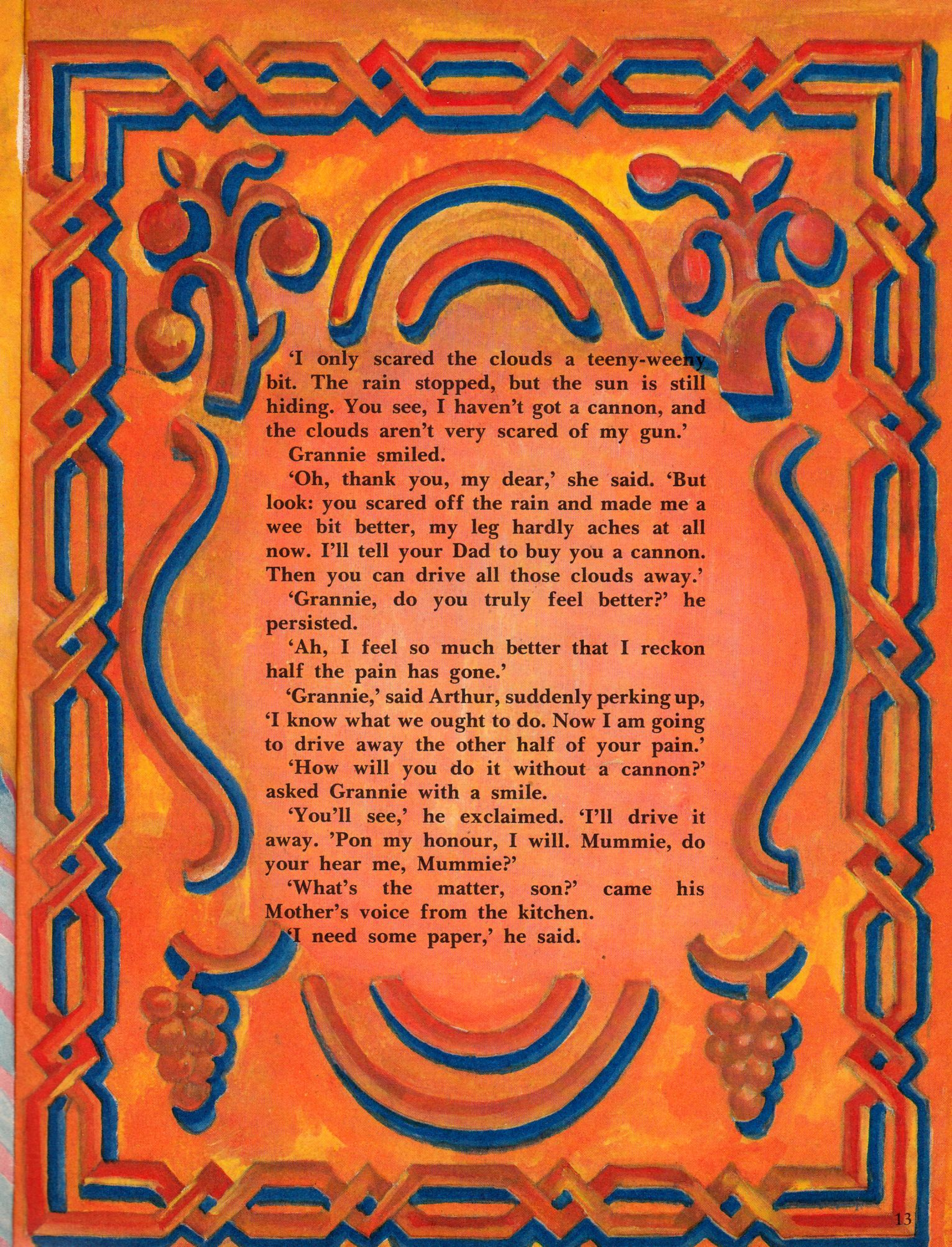
But Arthur did not have a cannon, and Rachik lived a long way away.
There was nothing for it; Arthur trailed sadly back into the room and
sat down next to Grannie.

‘Gran, do you hear me, Gran?’ he asked.

‘Now what, balik-djan?’ she replied.



Armenian clay toys



'I only scared the clouds a teeny-weeny bit. The rain stopped, but the sun is still hiding. You see, I haven't got a cannon, and the clouds aren't very scared of my gun.'

Grannie smiled.

'Oh, thank you, my dear,' she said. 'But look: you scared off the rain and made me a wee bit better, my leg hardly aches at all now. I'll tell your Dad to buy you a cannon. Then you can drive all those clouds away.'

'Grannie, do you truly feel better?' he persisted.

'Ah, I feel so much better that I reckon half the pain has gone.'

'Grannie,' said Arthur, suddenly perking up, 'I know what we ought to do. Now I am going to drive away the other half of your pain.'

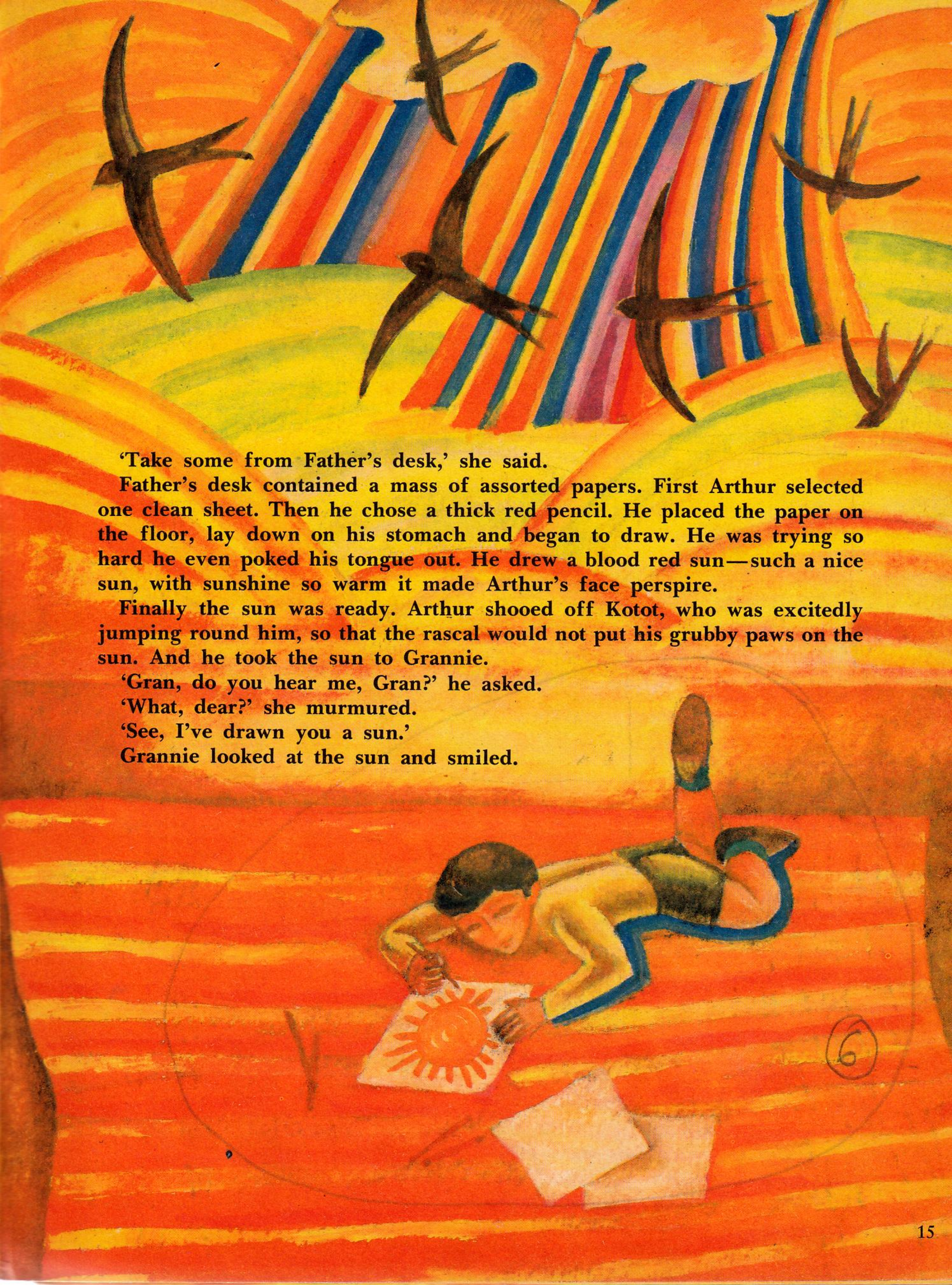
'How will you do it without a cannon?' asked Grannie with a smile.

'You'll see,' he exclaimed. 'I'll drive it away. 'Pon my honour, I will. Mummie, do your hear me, Mummie?'

'What's the matter, son?' came his Mother's voice from the kitchen.

'I need some paper,' he said.





‘Take some from Father’s desk,’ she said.

Father’s desk contained a mass of assorted papers. First Arthur selected one clean sheet. Then he chose a thick red pencil. He placed the paper on the floor, lay down on his stomach and began to draw. He was trying so hard he even poked his tongue out. He drew a blood red sun—such a nice sun, with sunshine so warm it made Arthur’s face perspire.

Finally the sun was ready. Arthur shooed off Kotot, who was excitedly jumping round him, so that the rascal would not put his grubby paws on the sun. And he took the sun to Grannie.

‘Gran, do you hear me, Gran?’ he asked.

‘What, dear?’ she murmured.

‘See, I’ve drawn you a sun.’

Grannie looked at the sun and smiled.



‘What a lovely red sun,’ she said, clucking her tongue. ‘And how warm it is. Here, let me put it near my leg.’

Grannie took the sun and put it to her bad leg.

‘Now that’s a sun, all right. Do you know, the pain in my leg has altogether gone. Who cured Grannie? It is Arthur.’

Grannie kissed her grandson, then smiled, then kissed him again, then smiled once more and continued to smile and kiss little Arthur until she felt drowsy and nodded off to sleep with Arthur’s sun on her leg.



By evening Grannie's leg did not hurt at all. True. Arthur's sun had fallen off the settee to the floor, and silly Kotot had trodden on the sun several times with his dirty paws; but Grannie was already healed.

That evening Father asked Grannie how she was feeling.

'Fine, thanks,' she said. 'Arthur's sun cured me.'

Father did not understand. But Grannie explained it all to him.

Arthur scratched his nose with pleasure.

It was always like that. Arthur's nose always itched when Arthur got excited, and when he cried as well.

Today Arthur was very pleased with himself. He was so kind and well-behaved that Father even said that Arthur ought to be an example to other children. And off he went to bed as a prize example.

Arthur's sun lay on the floor. And on top of the sun, stretched out on his stomach, slept the pup. Arthur shouted at him:

'Get up, Kotot. How can anyone sleep on top of the sun? You'll burn your stomach. Get up.'

Translated by Jim Riordan



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Drawings from the
Yerevan Children's Art
Gallery





ALL'S WELL WHEN ALL'S WELL

'I'll look after Arthur from the balcony, Grannie said to Mother.

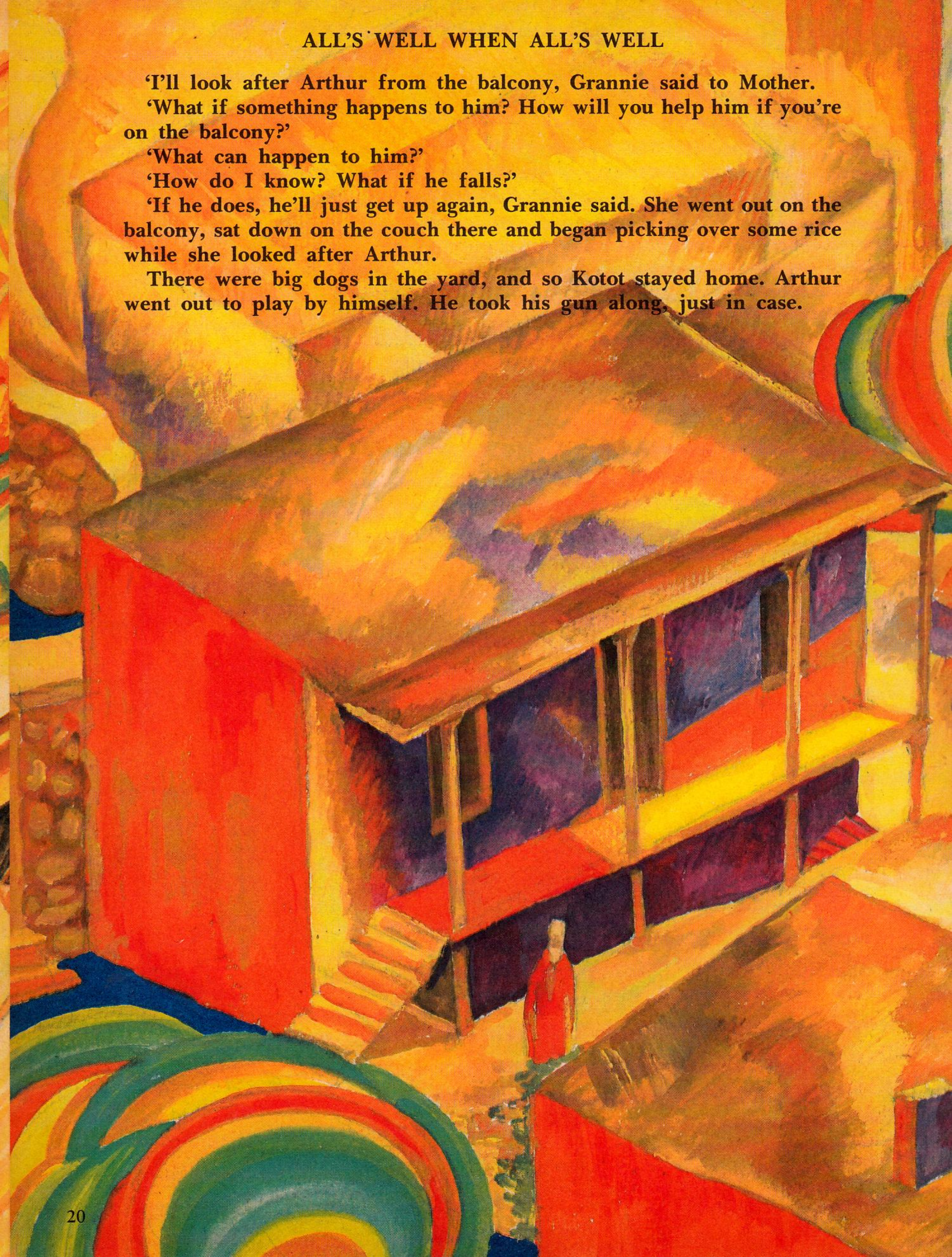
'What if something happens to him? How will you help him if you're on the balcony?'

'What can happen to him?'

'How do I know? What if he falls?'

'If he does, he'll just get up again, Grannie said. She went out on the balcony, sat down on the couch there and began picking over some rice while she looked after Arthur.

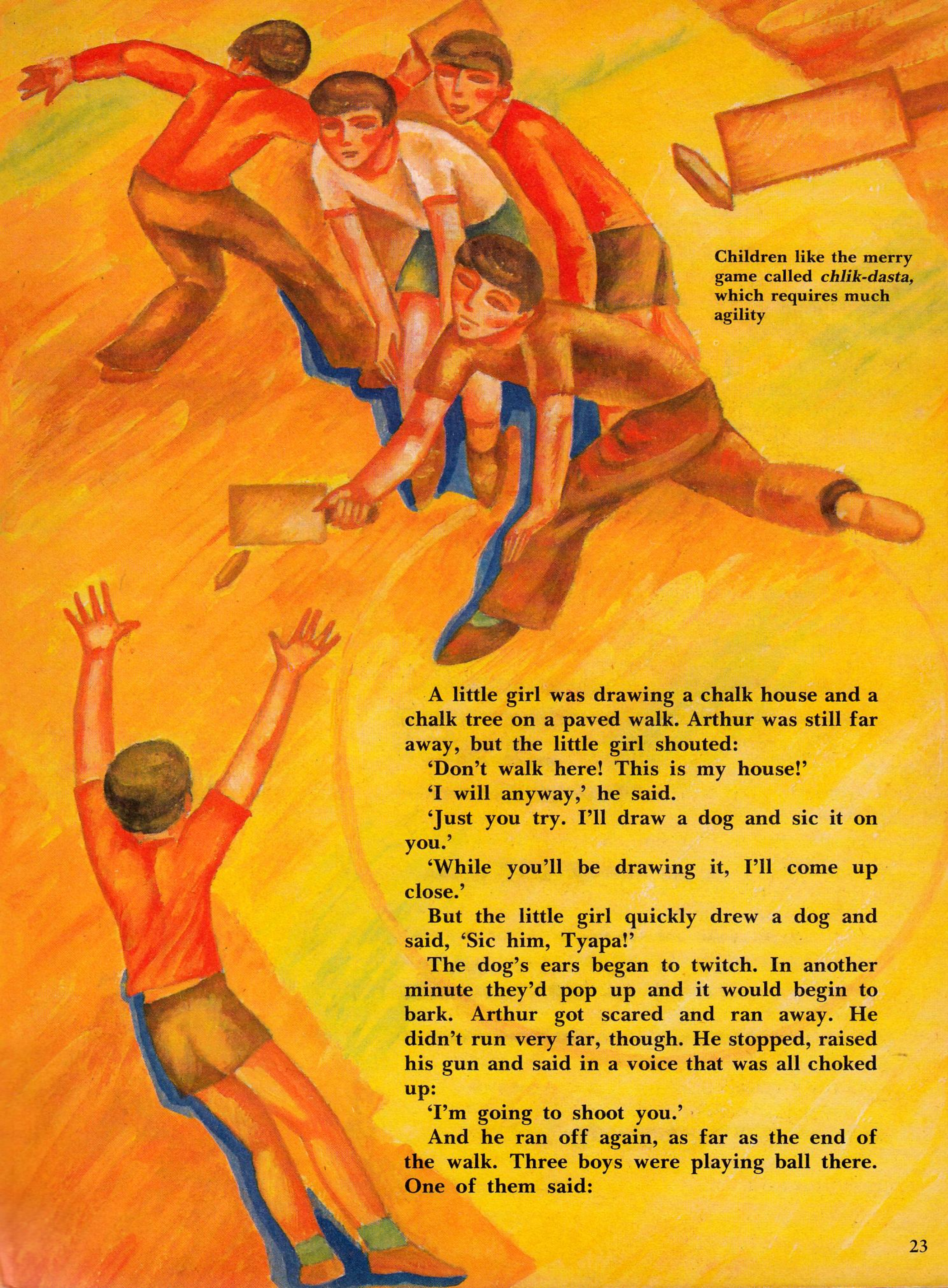
There were big dogs in the yard, and so Kotot stayed home. Arthur went out to play by himself. He took his gun along, just in case.







Gaïsh, a game young boys
play in Armenia, requires
courage, agility, and
contempt for pain: if one
does not recoil, duck or
strike back the leather belt
swung in the air, in time,
the blow is quite strong



Children like the merry game called *chlik-dasta*, which requires much agility

A little girl was drawing a chalk house and a chalk tree on a paved walk. Arthur was still far away, but the little girl shouted:

‘Don’t walk here! This is my house!’

‘I will anyway,’ he said.

‘Just you try. I’ll draw a dog and sic it on you.’

‘While you’ll be drawing it, I’ll come up close.’

But the little girl quickly drew a dog and said, ‘Sic him, Tyapa!’

The dog’s ears began to twitch. In another minute they’d pop up and it would begin to bark. Arthur got scared and ran away. He didn’t run very far, though. He stopped, raised his gun and said in a voice that was all choked up:

‘I’m going to shoot you.’

And he ran off again, as far as the end of the walk. Three boys were playing ball there. One of them said:



'Hey, you! What's your name?'

'That's Arthur. I know him,' the second boy said.

'Want to play ball with us, Arthur?' the third boy said.

They began to play ball, but Arthur's gun was in his way.

'Leave your gun under that tree. My name's Gevorg,' the first boy said and held out his hand.

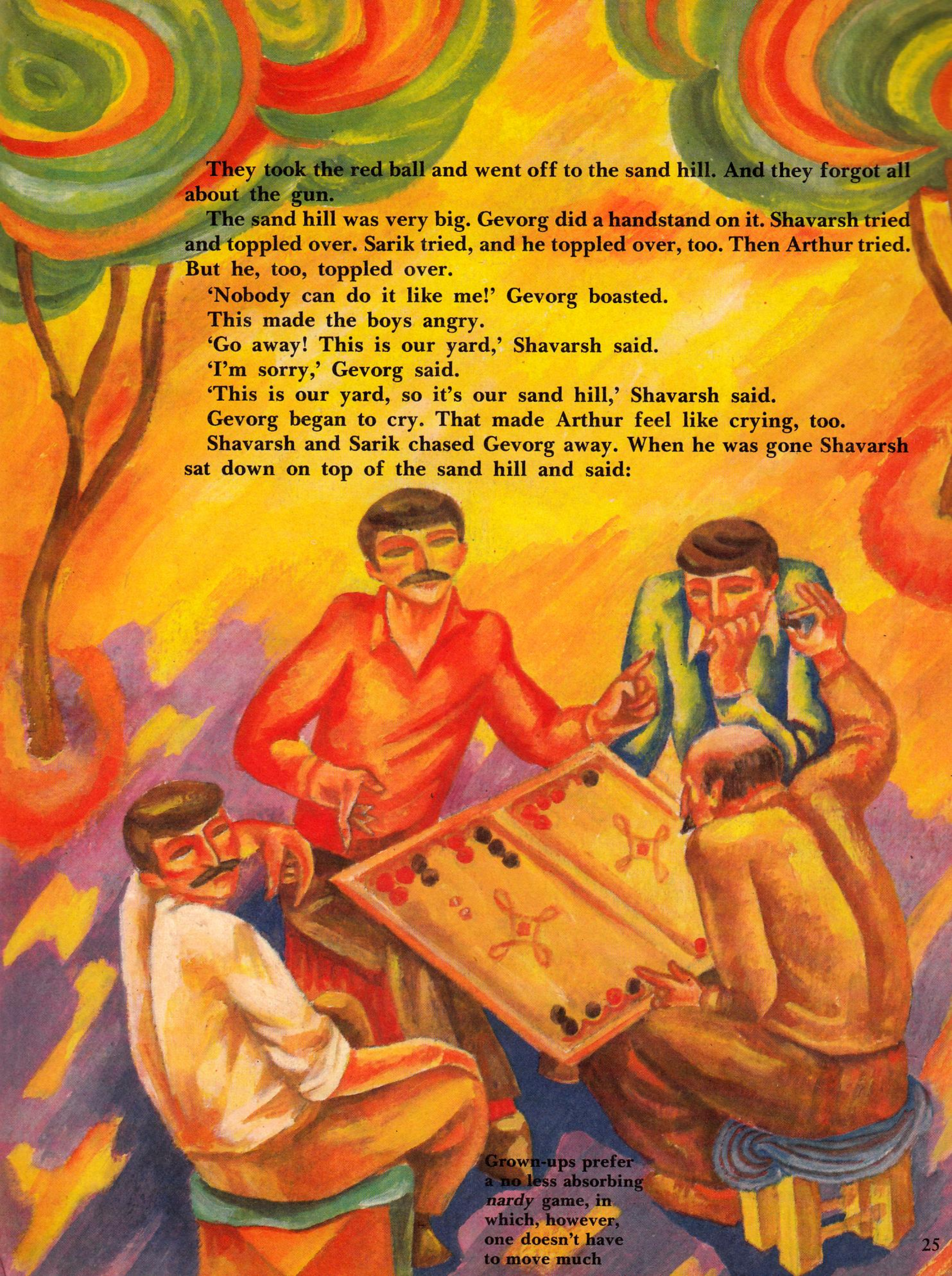
'My name's Shavarsh,' the second boy said.

'My name's Sarik,' the third boy said.

The boys had a big red ball. So Arthur left his gun under the tree and joined them. The awful girl's dog was far away, and Arthur wasn't a bit scared.

They'd just begun to play when the janitor came out. He had a long hose.

'Run along, boys, I'm going to water the grass,' he said.



They took the red ball and went off to the sand hill. And they forgot all about the gun.

The sand hill was very big. Gevorg did a handstand on it. Shavarsh tried and toppled over. Sarik tried, and he toppled over, too. Then Arthur tried. But he, too, toppled over.

‘Nobody can do it like me!’ Gevorg boasted.

This made the boys angry.

‘Go away! This is our yard,’ Shavarsh said.

‘I’m sorry,’ Gevorg said.

‘This is our yard, so it’s our sand hill,’ Shavarsh said.

Gevorg began to cry. That made Arthur feel like crying, too.

Shavarsh and Sarik chased Gevorg away. When he was gone Shavarsh sat down on top of the sand hill and said:

Grown-ups prefer
a no less absorbing
nardy game, in
which, however,
one doesn’t have
to move much

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Yerevan, the
city that will
be 2,765
years old in
1983





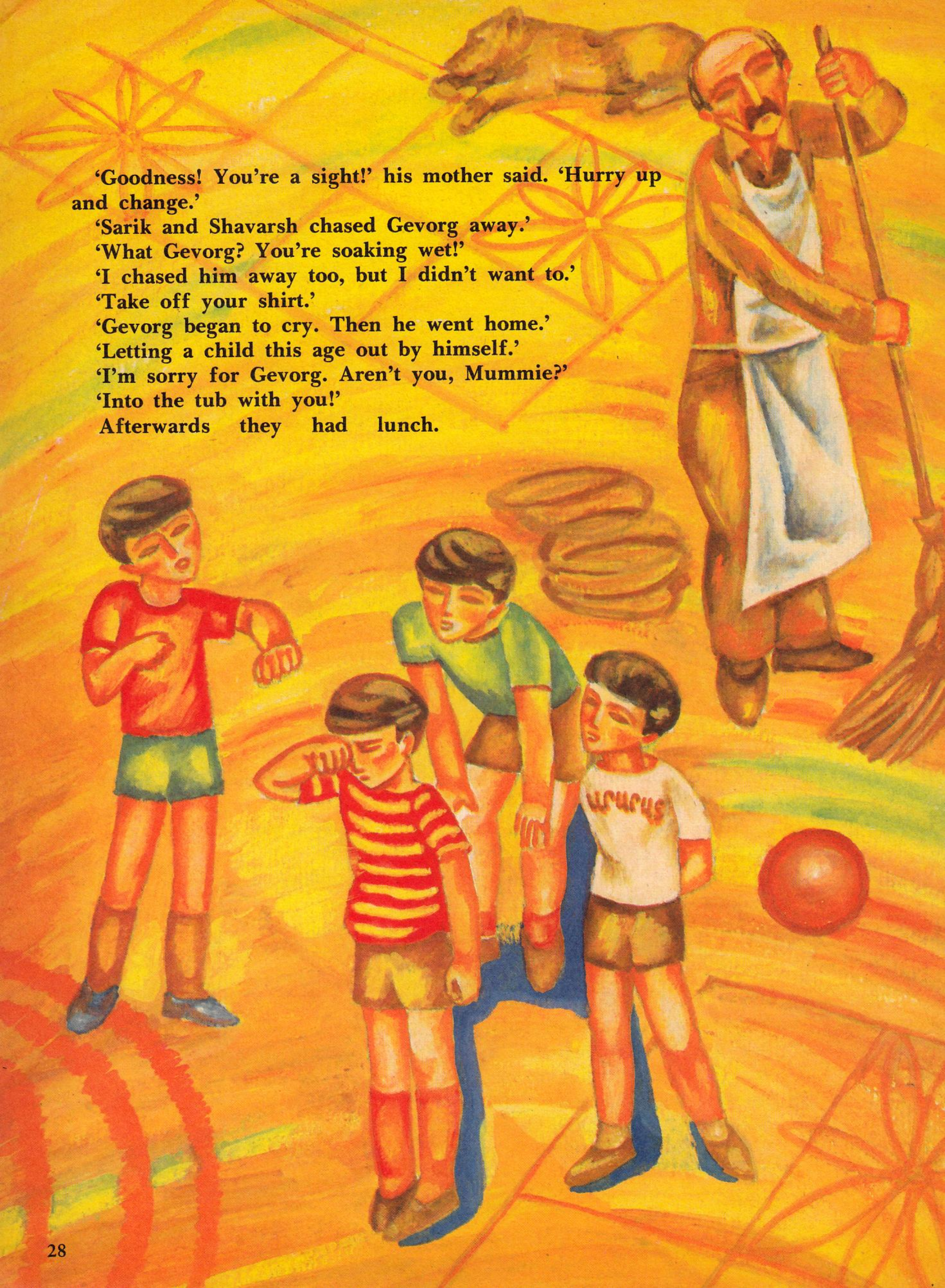
‘This is great!’

Arthur sat down, too, but he didn’t say anything, because he didn’t feel happy at all.

Then they rolled the ball down the hill, again, and again, and again. Still, he felt awful.

After a while Shavarsh’s mother called to him. ‘Come home. It’s time for lunch,’ she said.

Shavarsh went home, taking his bright red ball. Now the yard seemed very uninteresting. Sarik had no manners at all, because he began picking his nose. So did Arthur, but this was probably because he was so bored and was feeling so unhappy... He ran down the hill and suddenly began to feel very hungry. But he didn’t go back along the paved walk where the girl was, because he was scared of her dog. He ran all around the house and got soaked when he ran under the stream of water from the janitor’s hose. At last he reached his door.



‘Goodness! You’re a sight!’ his mother said. ‘Hurry up and change.’

‘Sarik and Shavarsh chased Gevorg away.’

‘What Gevorg? You’re soaking wet!’

‘I chased him away too, but I didn’t want to.’

‘Take off your shirt.’

‘Gevorg began to cry. Then he went home.’

‘Letting a child this age out by himself.’

‘I’m sorry for Gevorg. Aren’t you, Mummie?’

‘Into the tub with you!’

Afterwards they had lunch.



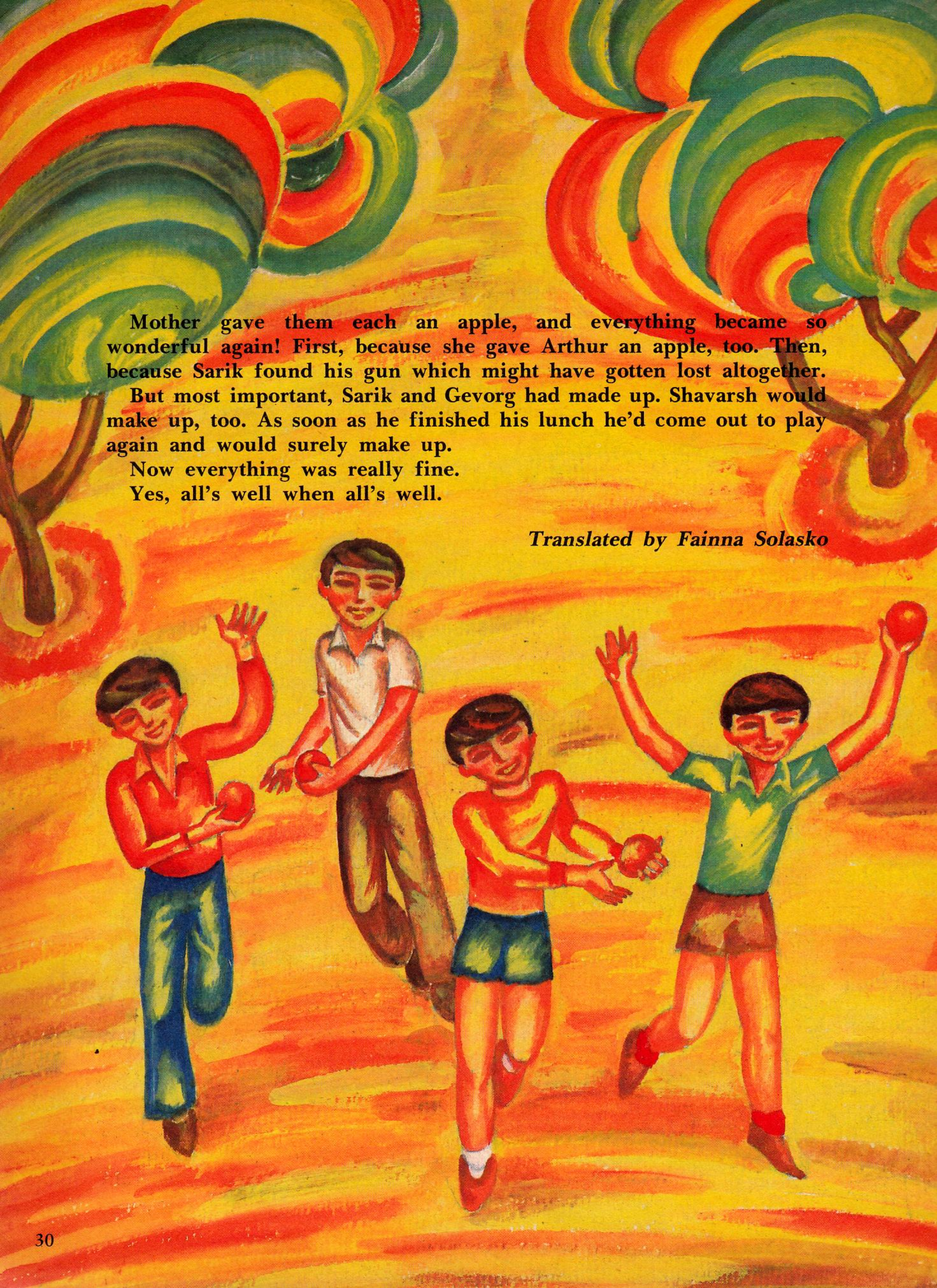
Women making fel
can be seen in man
courtyards

Mother of course had bathed Arthur and put dry clothes on him.

‘My gun’s in the yard. It’s probably lost now,’ Arthur said to himself. ‘Anyone who’s left all alone gets lost.’

The doorbell rang. Mother opened the door. It was Sarik and Gevorg. Gevorg was holding a gun.

‘Here’s your gun, Arthur. We found it. Sarik found it,’ he said.



Mother gave them each an apple, and everything became so wonderful again! First, because she gave Arthur an apple, too. Then, because Sarik found his gun which might have gotten lost altogether.

But most important, Sarik and Gevorg had made up. Shavarsh would make up, too. As soon as he finished his lunch he'd come out to play again and would surely make up.

Now everything was really fine.

Yes, all's well when all's well.

Translated by Fainna Solasko

ԲՅՈՒՐԱԿԱՆ

Byurakan is an
astrophysical
observatory with the
latest equipment,
engaged in space
studies



Here is how the tasty *lavash* bread is baked





The Armenian alphabet was worked out in the 5th cent. A.D. by the enlightener Mesrop Mashtots, whose name is revered by every Armenian



ԱՅԱՍՏԻՆ

ARMENIA



ԱՅՐԵՆԻԻ

MOTHERLAND

ԲԱՐԻ ԵՒԼՈՒՄ

YOU ARE WELCOME



Х. ГЮЛЬНАЗАРЯН
Артурикино солнце
На английском языке

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